

MUD GANG

WORKSHOP TERMS & CONDITIONS
& FAQs



Attendees may enter the class at the session's start time. Early arrivals must wait outside. All attendees must begin packing up 15 minutes prior to the end of the session to allow time to label and store their work & clean their tools and workspace with sponge and water. This is practised in all ceramic studios and classes in order to observe COSHH guidelines. Please refer to our COSHH guidelines below for more information.

The general process for making ceramics is as follows:

- Make your pieces
- Leave them to dry over an extended period of time (ideally a week if you wish to come back and refine it; 2-4weeks if you wish to fire your piece depending on size)
- Come back and refine your pieces by trimming and fettling. You can also decorate with slips/underglazes at this time (optional).
- Work left to dry completely before first firing (3+ weeks depending on size and weather)
- Come back and glaze your pieces
- Work is fired a final time and ready to take home! (3+ week turnover time)

By purchasing any class or booking any private event with us, including vouchers, you are agreeing to the terms, conditions and guidelines set out in this document.

How long is my class valid for?

Class passes for our drop in classes and all vouchers are valid for 6 months from the date of purchase.

If you have purchased a class for a specific date, it is valid for that date only unless you wish to reschedule, in which case please refer to 'I can't make it to the class, can I reschedule?' below. This is valid for 2 months from purchasing the class, after this it is no longer valid.

All classes (including class passes) are non-refundable, non-exchangeable & are for individual use - unless stated otherwise in the class description.

I can't make it to the class, can I reschedule?

You may reschedule once per booking, with 48 hours notice. As a small non-profit, we are unable to make exceptions to this regardless of the reason - this includes covid, sickness or any other unexpected changes. Where appropriate notice isn't given or if 2 months have passed since the purchase date, you will not be entitled to reschedule or be refunded. If you have rescheduled a class once already, you will not be entitled to reschedule again or be refunded.

How long will my work be kept for?

Unfired work in progress is stored for 2 weeks and must be labelled with your name and the date attended, after this point it becomes too dry to continue to work on and will be recycled. Please notify us if you want us to fire work in progress if you're not able to attend within two weeks otherwise it will be recycled. Any work that is not labelled correctly may be recycled.

Bisque/finished work is stored for a maximum 4 to 6 weeks. If you have bisque and cannot attend for an extended period of time for any reason, including bookings being unavailable, please take this home and then bring it back when you wish to resume classes.

We don't have storage capacity to store work for longer than the above mentioned period. If your work is disposed of after this time/has not been labelled appropriately with the date you will not be entitled to any form of refund.

Will I take something home after the first session?

Knowledge of working with clay yes, but nothing physical yet, sorry! Work has to be fired in our kiln twice before it is finished. Once to bisque and then at another session you will have to glaze it and then it will be fired again.

How many sessions should I come to?

It depends what you would like to make, but you will need to attend a minimum of three sessions to produce finished pieces. Pottery is a time consuming process with many stages and is best approached as an ongoing practice, where you can learn and improve on new skills.

Can I come and glaze my work quickly and pay for a shorter session?

If you are only wanting to do a set number of sessions we recommend that you make lots of things in the first session, refine and add to work in the second session and then have lots of work to glaze in the third session.

Glazing can also take a lot longer than you might think, mixing the glazes itself can take a while. You can also experiment with painting on wax resist and drawing designs with ceramic pencils at bisque stage too.

All classes are charged at a flat rate.

What happens if I get there late or need to leave early?

We recommend arriving promptly and staying for the full session if you want to make the most of your time and money as workshops are charged at a flat rate.

Help! I can't find my work!

Maybe it's a long time since you last came to Mud Gang, maybe your piece has been transformed beyond recognition since being fired. Sometimes it can be hard to find your work, but unless it has exploded in the kiln or 3 weeks has passed since you have attended, it will be there somewhere! We recommend that you initial your work and take photos to make it easier to locate your work at your next session.

Due to the unpredictable nature of ceramics, we're unable to issue any form of refunds for breakages/explosions.

General health & safety and repairs

Mud Gang shall not be held responsible in the event of an injury caused in the premises and/or student(s) failure to adhere to COSHH guidelines.

Should any repairs be the result of any student(s) conduct and/or failure to adhere to COSHH guidelines they may be liable for associated costs.

We may close our premises for reasonable periods of time to carry out essential maintenance, repairs, refurbishment, or for other reasons outside of our control at our discretion and with reasonable notice. We will endeavour to reopen facilities as soon as possible in these circumstances. Ceramics equipment needs to be serviced regularly and have minor repair works done in order to keep them in working order. This may, on occasion, cause a delay in the usual time frame for firing. You will not be eligible for any refund for the temporary interruption in services during these periods.

Help! My piece has broken!

There are also many reasons why work may crack before, during or after a firing. Drying time, types of clay, air bubbles and how work is built are some of the main causes of cracking; this is something that we cannot control. As practising ceramicists ourselves, we understand how frustrating this is and we are always disappointed when something breaks! The communal nature of the studio means that glaze finish may vary and there is a chance that your work may get damaged between loading firings. Of course we take a lot of care to prevent this - but, unfortunately, accidents can happen. Due to the delicate and uncertain nature of ceramics, you will not be eligible for any refund in the aforementioned circumstances.

Please leave your work to be fired on the labelled shelving and **avoid moving and/or touching others' work and potentially damaging it.**

Firing and equipment

We estimate 3 weeks turnover time per firing. This can sometimes be shorter or longer depending on the weather affecting drying times and volume of work there is to fire. Kilns need regular maintenance and this can cause delays that are out of our control. You will not be entitled to any refund as a result of any delays in firings.

We will not fire work that has been glazed too thickly or is too thick/solid to prevent kiln breakage and damage to others' work. You will not be entitled to any refund in the aforementioned circumstances.

At our Monday, Wednesday and Friday evening classes, you will have the chance to handbuild and try some wheel throwing. The slab roller is not for use in workshops. This is not a dedicated throwing session and so you may not get the chance to throw every session and attendees cannot use the wheel for the duration of the whole session. The first thrown pieces you make may not be fired at our discretion - this is all part of the learning process and helps reduce our environmental impact.

Changes

We may, at our discretion, review and amend our terms and conditions at any time. In the event of this, we will send an updated copy to all existing members and upload it to our website.

Get in touch with us if you have any questions!

You may contact us via email at mudgangpottery@gmail.com and we will aim to respond within 2 working days (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm). We will not respond to queries via our personal phone numbers, social media, etc.

COSHH Guidelines

Silica is in clay and all the materials used in ceramics (glaze, slips etc.) When anything containing silica dries, it can become airborne and breathed into the lungs which cannot filter it out. Long term exposure to large amounts of silica dust can result in a disease called silicosis and other associated lung diseases. COSHH (Control of Substances Harmful to Health) is a regulation that has been in place for over 25 years and included in this is silica. Oxides are also toxic. To avoid contamination we restrict the use of these in workshops. We ask that members who have oxides use them responsibly, as detailed below. The good news is that good studio practice can minimise the levels of silica dust in the environment — so that we can all breathe easy! Attendees are expected to follow the guidance below.

Here's what you have to do:

- **Do not enter restricted areas or use any equipment or specialist tools unless under the guidance of a teacher.**

- **Do not dry fettle** - fettling is when you tidy up pieces by shaving or trimming off excess clay with a grater, metal kidney, metal tool etc. If your piece is bone dry don't fettle it! Only fettle clay when it is leather hard and place any trimmings into a labelled reclaim bucket to be recycled. If your piece is bone dry and you really want to neaten it up, use a damp sponge or spray it generously with water and wrap it until it is a leather hard texture again.

- **Do not blow on and avoid rubbing/scraping off glaze** - small lumps and bumps are normal when dipping and pouring glaze. These usually melt and even out in the kiln. However, if you have any big lumps of glaze on your piece that you really need to get rid of, do this over a bowl of water or the bucket of glaze. Do not blow on it — that way this chunk will fall back into the glaze bucket and not become airborne dust.

- **Do not use excessive amounts of wax resist** as the fumes can be harmful. It would be preferable to wipe glaze off the base of pieces as opposed to using wax resist. We have canvas covered boards that make for quick wiping of large batches of work!

- **Do not use dry sandpaper** - if you have a fired piece that you need to sand, you must **wet the piece and the sandpaper** and, ideally, sand it outside. Alternatively, if you wish to dry sand this **must be done outside** but you must wear a respirator with a particulate filter.

- **Do not load/unload/operate or remove anything from the kiln** . A technician will do this. Please also ensure you don't leave anything around or on the kiln.

- **Please clean the tools you use and your workspace** with a sponge and water at the end of each session and give the floor a mop where you've been working. **Do not sweep** as this kicks up dust - **all spillages/clay trimmings** that are littered onto the ground **must be mopped or cleaned with a wet sponge immediately** so as not to dry and become dust.

- **Please clean glazing equipment** (e.g. tongs, mixer and stirring sticks) **after use and between using different glazes** to avoid contamination. If you're **using multiple glazes at a time please put the lid on** those which you aren't using to **avoid contamination**. Please remember to close glaze lids firmly after use.

- **Place any waste/dry clay in a reclaim bucket to be recycled.** These are all labelled accordingly but let us know if you can't find them.

- If you're using **dry materials** (e.g. powdered oxides, dry glaze materials etc.) please ensure the **windows are open** and you or anyone else who is around you in the studio while you're using them are **wearing respirators with particulate filters**.

And last of all, if you need any advice or are unsure about how to do any of the above, just ask. We're here to help, as well as keep the environment clean and safe for everybody who uses it.